

Status & Problems of Christian cemeteries in Delhi



a report



सत्यमेव जयते

**DELHI MINORITIES
COMMISSION**

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI

**STATUS & PROBLEMS
OF CHRISTIAN CEMETERIES
IN DELHI**

A REPORT



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DELHI MINORITIES COMMISSION

Govt. of NCT of Delhi

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New Delhi - 110002

Study conducted for Delhi Minorities Commission by

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PREFACE

This study on the history, issues and problems of the Christian cemeteries in NCT of Delhi, was commissioned in 2016 and was submitted to the Delhi Minorities Commission on 4th February, 2017. It could not be published earlier as the tenure of the previous commission, headed by Shri Qamar Ahmad, ended soon thereafter. Now, after taking charge on 20 July 2017, we went through the report and got corrections and changes made by the NGO which prepared it on behalf of DMC.

The study highlights the current status of the Christian cemeteries in Delhi, their present condition and future needs.

It shows that the growing Christian community of Delhi needs more land for its cemeteries. They have already submitted applications in this regard to the concerned authorities in Delhi.

The study suggests adoption of *kacha* method where no permanent graves are made. Instead, the space is re-used every seven years (which is the method adopted in many Muslim graveyards in Delhi and elsewhere in the country where the same grave is used after a few years).

The study also offers an account of the burial problems in various countries and how the challenge of the scarcity of land is met. There are useful recommendations on pp. 41, 61-63 which should be carefully studied by DDA and Delhi town-planners.

DMC is pleased to bring out this study as part of its mandate to highlight the problems of the minorities in Delhi and help find solutions for the same.

Dr. Zafarul-Islam Khan, Chairman
Kartar Singh Kochhar, Member
Anastasia Gill, Member
Delhi Minorities Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The preparation of this survey report has been an enriching learning experience for the entire team of Ullhas Foundation. The conduct of this survey/Study involved reviewing various primary and secondary researches, framing the methodology, visiting various officials of the churches and cemeteries, meeting local people belonging to the Christian population, interviewing and getting the questionnaires filled from them and meeting senior officials of the DDA & local bodies.

The Ullhas Team would like to take this opportunity to thank Delhi Minorities Commission for their faith in us to conduct this study. Our special thanks to Mr. Vikas Goyal ((the then) Deputy Secretary, DMC), Mr. Abraham M. Pattiyani ((the then) Member, DMC), Mr. Pankaj from administration team, for their support and cooperation in conducting this study. We are highly grateful and thankful to Mr. Abraham Pattiyani for sharing information and details pertaining to the pastors of the churches and cemeteries in Delhi and also sparing his valuable time to meet us and share details about the Christian population with us including details of prayer meetings and other rituals and beliefs as related to the burial practice in the cemeteries.

We are also thankful to the officials and pastors of the churches and cemeteries we visited for meeting us and enlightening us about minute details pertaining to the condition of the cemeteries and the grave problems they are facing in maintaining them. We are specially obliged that they took time out of their busy schedule to fill in the questionnaire provided by us and also happily shared their feedback and suggestions to improve the condition of the cemeteries in Delhi.

We would also like to thank the officials of DDA, NDMC, MCD etc for providing us time to meet and discuss provisions and the Delhi Master Plan 2021 and other laws related to the land use and usage of the cemeteries.

We would like to appreciate the efforts of the survey team members of Ullhas Foundation. The survey report would have not been completed without the cooperation and patience of all the team members.

The study has been a great learning experience for all those involved directly and indirectly, and the research team of Ullhas Foundation would like to thank everyone who took part in it.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ullhas Foundation was selected and assigned the task of conducting the study on the status and problems of Cemeteries in Delhi by the Delhi Minorities Commission. We are highly obliged and thankful to the Commission for providing us with this great opportunity. The report is complete and is being shared with the Delhi Minorities Commission. The report also comprises duly filled questionnaire & other related documents.

To accomplish this task, Ullhas foundation has divided its team members into two groups. One to take care and work upon collection of the data, information and other important details from the Church and Cemeteries. They also worked on interviewing the church leaders and representatives of the Cemeteries and the other group worked on procuring policies from DDA and other Govt. agencies/departments, meeting senior officials of land giving agencies and preparing the report.

Ullhas Foundation has looked into all the possible parameters of the study based on the information from the Churches, Cemeteries and officials of DDA, MCD etc who provided us with substantial facts and information to make the report authentic.

1.1 OBJECTIVE

As per the expression of interest published by the Delhi Minorities Commission, the ultimate objective of conducting this study is to find out the condition of the Cemeteries in Delhi and make recommendations to the Govt of NCT of Delhi to take appropriate remedial policy decisions/measures so as to resolve the problems of Cemeteries in Delhi which would *interalia* include:

- i. Assessment of the requirement of cemeteries for the Christian Community in Delhi.
- ii. Areas/Pockets having substantial Christian population in Delhi, and whether Cemeteries are available in their vicinity, if no cemetery is available in the vicinity which cemetery they take their dead bodies for burial.
- iii. Existing cemeteries in Delhi, their numbers and locations.
- iv. How many Cemeteries are governed by church and how many under private management
- v. Which govt. agency/department is responsible for allotment of land for Cemeteries, their maintenance and improvement?

- vi. Status of existing Cemeteries viz-a-viz the adequacy of land and availability of other facilities.
- vii. Are there any Cemeteries within the inhabited colonies if so what is the scope for their re-location?
- viii. What is the DDA's policy regarding allotment of land for Cemeteries, as per their master plan-20021, and what are its yardsticks/norms in this regard.
- ix. Report would indicate clearly about the adequacy and requirement of Cemeteries keeping in view the population and spread of community in Delhi.
- x. Outcome of this study and recommendation to address the issue.
- xi. Any other parameters for conducting the study.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for carrying out this study is as under:

- i. Study of MPD 2021(Master Planning Delhi) laying out the basic policy/guidelines for the allotment of land for the Cemeteries/Burial Ground.
- ii. Studying other policies in relation to the allotment of land, maintenance and other laws and procedures as applicable for the Cemeteries.
- iii. Meetings, interviews/discussion with the Church leaders, officials and other representatives at the Cemeteries.
- iv. Meetings and discussions/interviews with the members of Christian community and associations.
- v. Meetings and discussion with the officials from different departments like DDA, NDMC and MCD.
- vi. Getting the questionnaires duly filled designed separately for the Churches and the Cemeteries.
- vii. Study of the best practices followed nationally and globally
- viii. Study of eco-cemeteries.
- ix. Conclusion with specific recommendations.

2. GENERAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Christianity in India

About 2.3% of India's population is Christians. Christianity arrived in India almost about the same period as it arrived in Europe, meaning about 2000 years ago.

Today there are about 30 million Christians in India. The major centres of Christianity in India are:

- Meghalaya
- Nagaland
- Mizoram
- Manipur
- Arunachal Pradesh
- Kerala
- Goa
- Tamil Nadu
- Andaman & Nicobar Islands

(All India Religion Census Data 2011)

Religion	Percentage	Estimated(Cr)	Total(Cr)	Male (Cr)	Female(Cr)
All Religion	100.00%	121.09	121.09	62.33	58.76
Hindu	79.80%	96.63	96.63	49.83	46.80
Muslim	14.23%	17.22	17.22	8.83	8.40
Christian	2.30%	2.78	2.78	1.38	1.41
Sikh	1.72%	2.08	2.08	1.09	0.99
Buddhist	0.70%	0.84	0.84	0.43	0.41
Jain	0.37%	0.45	0.45	0.23	0.22
Other Religion	0.66%	0.79	0.79	0.40	0.40
Not Stated	0.24%	0.29	0.29	0.15	0.14

Source: Census of India 2011

The Christians constitute about 2.3% of the total Indian population, in which 34% are urban residents. Christians have a higher literacy level (80%) as compared to other religious minorities and above national literacy rate of 65%. They are generally engaged in service sector except in some states. Christians are more concerned about health and have better level of wellbeing.

2.2 Christian Population in Delhi

Delhi is a place where people from different backgrounds have settled since years, lending a cosmopolitan nature to the capital. People from different religions are living here in harmony. Some of the religious communities in Delhi are:

- Hindus
- Christians
- Jains
- Muslims
- Sikhs
- Buddhists

Delhi Religion Census 2011

State	Type	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Other Religions	Not stated
Delhi	Total	81.68%	12.86%	0.87%	3.40%	0.11%	0.99%	0.01%	0.08%
Delhi	Urban	81.42%	13.01%	0.89%	3.46%	0.11%	1.01%	0.01%	0.08%
Delhi	Rural	91.64%	6.95%	0.27%	0.97%	0.04%	0.05%	0.01%	0.07%

Delhi Districts - Religion 2011

District	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Other Religions	Not stated
North West Delhi	87.82%	7.97%	0.39%	2.52%	0.06%	1.19%	0.01%	0.05%
South Delhi	78.91%	16.32%	1.53%	2.54%	0.14%	0.40%	0.02%	0.12%
West Delhi	82.07%	5.89%	0.72%	10.69%	0.08%	0.45%	0.01%	0.10%
South West Delhi	91.70%	4.91%	1.36%	1.38%	0.12%	0.40%	0.01%	0.10%
North East Delhi	68.22%	29.34%	0.41%	0.78%	0.11%	1.10%	0.00%	0.05%
East Delhi	82.54%	10.46%	0.92%	3.10%	0.15%	2.75%	0.02%	0.05%
North Delhi	81.81%	13.49%	0.82%	2.15%	0.21%	1.47%	0.01%	0.05%
Central Delhi	62.53%	33.36%	0.61%	2.24%	0.06%	1.01%	0.02%	0.17%
New Delhi	87.66%	5.97%	3.42%	2.07%	0.22%	0.48%	0.05%	0.14%

Source: Census Data 2011

2.3. Status of Cemeteries in Delhi

There are only seven cemeteries which are open today, as the remaining does not have vacant space left for the fresh burials.

The seven open Cemeteries in Delhi are:

- i. Indian Christian Cemetery-Burari
- ii. MCD Christian Cemetery-Dwarka
- iii. St. Thomas Christian Cemetery-Tuglakhabad
- iv. Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery- Mangolpuri
- v. Okhla Cemetery-Okhla
- vi. Christian Cemetery-Bihari Colony, Shahdara
- vii. St. John's Church Cemetery, Mehrauli

Apart from these remaining others are already closed for the fresh burial and they are open only for family graves (Doubling).

The Okhla Cemetery is open only for the parish families and cannot be used by other local Christian population and same is with St. John's Church Cemetery which is open only for the family members of C.N.I. (Church of North India) and cannot be used by other people belonging to the Christian population.

This shows that there is an acute shortage of the Cemeteries in Delhi which are open to all the people of the Christian Population to cater to the needs of ever growing Christian population. Moreover the ones which are new like Indian Christian Cemetery in Burari is very remotely located and are thus not preferred by all the Christian people residing in Delhi.

2.4 Areas/pockets in Delhi where Christian population resides

As per the discussion with the people from the Christian community and the Bishops and officials of Church and Christian organizations at present the Christian population is spread all over Delhi and as per their requirements and preferences, they relocate or shift accordingly as per their choice of schools, colleges, offices etc. but there are some specific pockets where the Christian population resides:-

- Mayur Vihar - East Delhi
- R.K. Puram - South Delhi
- Mehrauli - South Delhi
- Dariya Ganj - Central Delhi
- Karol Bagh - Central Delhi
- Burari - North Delhi
- Rohini - North Delhi
- Pul Bangash - North Delhi
- Najafgarh - West Delhi
- Dwarka - West Delhi

Mayur Vihar in East Delhi is a preferable area to reside for the Christians from Kerala. As per the information received from the people of the Christian community earlier there used to reside a huge Christian population in Dariya Ganj and Karol Bagh but of late some of them have sold off their properties and have moved to some other place as per their choice, preference and need.

The fact remains that the spread/distribution Cemeteries in Delhi is not in accordance with the Christian population present. Many of the areas do not have Cemeteries present in their vicinity and thus they have to see which cemetery falls nearest to their location where they can go and carry out the final burial of the dead bodies of their loved ones.

For instance, a family residing in Ashok Place, New Delhi utilizes the Paharganj and York Cemetery for the burial of the dead bodies but since both these cemeteries are full and there is no space left for fresh burial they have to travel to the Indian Christian Cemetery Burari which is quite inconvenient for them.

The people residing in R.K. Puram travel to Burari for the burial of the dead bodies as they feel that this cemetery has enough space and proper facilities as required.

Similarly the people residing in Karol Bagh also feel convenient to travel to Burari as it is a new cemetery with fresh space available for burial.

The Christian population residing in Mayur Vihar prefers to go to the Noida Christian Cemetery Sector 126 for burial.

There are other areas as well where there is no cemetery available and as per the community and the church leaders there is requirement of around 4-5 more Cemeteries to reduce the problems of the people of the community.

The information as gathered from the questionnaires filled in, reveals that the new Cemeteries should be made at places where people have an easy access to them preferably one in each section of the city.

Some of the areas which were specifically suggested to develop Cemeteries are as mentioned under:

- R.K Puram
- Aya Nagar
- VasantKunj
- Rohini
- Laxmi Nagar
- Trilokpuri
- Narela

2.5 Cemeteries within the inhabited colonies

All in all, there are 13 cemeteries in Delhi, out of these nine Cemeteries are present in the inhabited colonies. The names of these Cemeteries are as mentioned below:

- MCD Christian Cemetery, Dwarka
- York Cemetery, Khan Market
- Nicolson Cemetery, Kashmere Gate
- Indian Christian Cemetery, Paharganj
- Rajpura Cemetery, GTB Nagar
- Okhla Cemetery, Okhla
- St. John's Church Cemetery, Mehrauli
- Alfa-Omega Christian Cemetery, Mangolpuri
- Christian Cemetery, Bihari Colony, Shahdara

All these Cemeteries are located within the proximity of the inhabited colonies and there is no scope for their relocation. The main reason for this being the scarcity of land that can be allotted for shifting them. Moreover now the land which is to be allotted for the cemetery purpose is proposed to be allotted in the outskirts itself and the areas nearby the highway are mainly preferred.

2.6 Existing Cemeteries in NCT of Delhi

The under-mentioned table shows all the existing Cemeteries in Delhi along with their location and the current status.

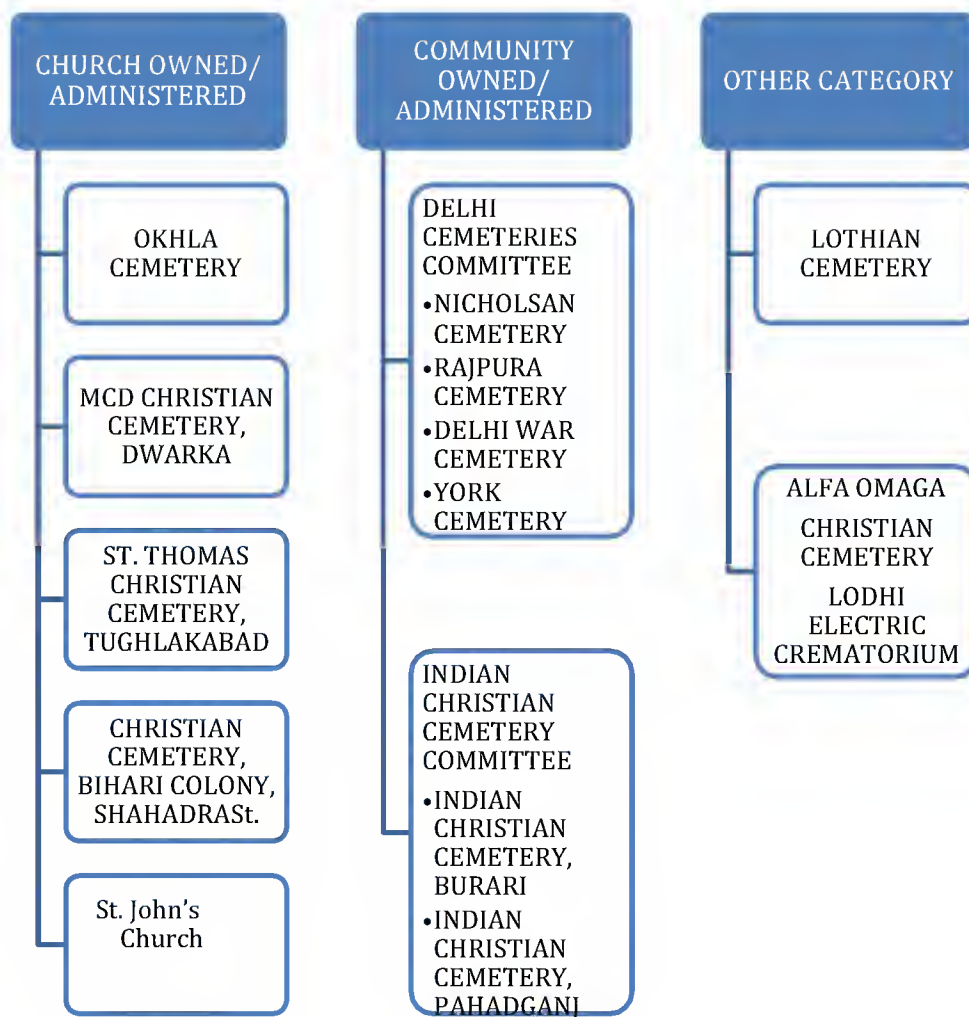
SR. NO.	AREA	LOCATION	STATUS
1)	Indian Christian Cemetery, Burari	By Pass road, Burari, New Delhi- 110009	OPEN
2)	MCD Christian Cemetery	Dwarka sector-24, New Delhi- 110075	OPEN
3)	St. Thomas Christian Cemetery	Delhi Orthodox Centre, 2 institutional area, Tughlakabad, New Delhi- 11006	OPEN
4)	Christian Cemetery	Lane No.15-Bihari Colony Shahadra, New Delhi-110032	OPEN
5)	Alfa-omega Christian Cemetery	Vijay Vihar, Rohini near Mangolpuri, New Delhi- 110085	OPEN
6)	Delhi War Cemetery	Delhi Cantonment, New Delhi	CLOSED (Only Doubling)

7)	Indian Christian Cemetery, Paharganj	Nehru Bazar, Paharganj, New Delhi- 110055	CLOSED (Only Doubling)
8)	Nicholson Cemetery	Atmospheric colonial Christians, graveyard club road, civil lines, New Delhi	CLOSED (Only Doubling)
9)	Lothian Cemetery	Netaji Subhash Marg, Priyadarshini Colony, Kashmiri Gate, New Delhi	CLOSED
10)	Rajpura Cemetery	Guru Tegh Bahadur Road, New Delhi	CLOSED (Only Doubling)
11)	York Cemetery	A-3 Prithviraj Road, near Khan Market, New Delhi	CLOSED (Only Doubling)
12)	Okhla Cemetery	Delhi Catholic Archdiocese site, near Masihgarh, Okhla village	OPERATIONAL (only for pastor families)
13)	St.Jones Compound-Christian Cemetery	Mehrauli, New Delhi-110030	OPEN (only for the members of CNI)

In addition to these there is also the Lodhi Electric Crematorium at Lodhi Road, New Delhi, which is also open to the people from Christian Community

3. Classification of the Cemeteries

All the Cemeteries are classified accordingly to their ownership/administration *i.e.*, either owned/administered by Church or by community. There are few which also fall under other category. The brief classification of all the Cemeteries is as shown below:



3.1 Church Owned/ Administered

a. OKHLA CEMETERY (Open)

Location	This Cemetery is located at Delhi Catholic Archdiocese site, near Masihgarh, Okhla village
Classification	Private Cemetery owned by Masihgarh Church for the Okhla-based parish of Delhi Catholic Archdiocese

Private Cemeteries are the one which are assigned to be utilized by the local population of that particular area where the cemetery is located. Okhla Cemetery is one of the private Cemeteries located in the Okhla village in Delhi, but this cemetery is not open for the common public of that area rather it is confined only for the Okhla-based Catholic Parish families.

This cemetery is a church owned cemetery which is owned and administered by Masihgarh church. In this cemetery, we got an opportunity to meet *Fr. George Manimal*, who is the Chairperson of this private cemetery and also the priest of Church (Shrine) of Our Lady of Health. We have been told that, "This particular Cemetery is open only for the parish families. These parish families are the followers of Catholic Archdiocese".

This cemetery is open only for the parish family so they don't go for permanent burial and use the kachha burial so that it keeps on going generation to generation and can be used again and again.

(The duly filled questionnaire is attached to the annexure 2)

b. MCD CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, DWARKA (OPEN)

Location	This Cemetery is located at Dwarka sector- 24, New Delhi-110075
Classification	This is a church owned cemetery- about 180 Churches are the member of the society/association called South west Delhi, M.C.D. Najafgarh Division

After Burari, Sector 24 of Dwarka has become the best suited and preferred cemetery for Christian population as it has enough land available is open for the fresh burial.

Here, we met Mr. C.M. Sathiabalan, General Secretary of MCD Christian Cemetery. From total land area available around 2 acre of land is allotted for cemetery by MCD, the remaining land is divided accordingly for the people from other communities to perform the last rites of their loved ones as per their rituals.

This cemetery is located at the extreme end of Dwarka due to which it becomes quite far for the people coming from east Delhi and south Delhi location.

Mr. C.M. Sathiabalan added, *“Cemeteries present in Delhi are insufficient and it is high time now that more Cemeteries are made available for the Christian Community”*. He further added that in order to meet the increasing requirements and to overcome the problems of the existing Cemeteries, he has submitted an application with Delhi Minorities Commission though long time back. The discussion with him concluded on the note that there is an acute problem of space in the existing Cemeteries as they are already full and cannot suffice further burials, hence it is high time now to think and take appropriate actions to overcome the problems of Cemeteries in Delhi.



c. ST. THOMAS CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, TUGHLAKABAD (OPERATIONAL)

Location	This cemetery is located at the Delhi Orthodox centre, 2 institutional area, Tughlakabad, New Delhi- 110062
Classification	This cemetery is church owned, administered by the association of all the local Churches

In 2012, to deal with the problem of shrinking space for burials, authorities of the St Thomas Christian Cemetery in Tughlakabad had decided to build a vertical cemetery. Three years later, St Thomas probably had Asia's largest vertical cemetery, consisting of 300 crypt cells.

In this cemetery we got an opportunity to meet Rev. Mathew Varghese, he is the second in charge in the St. Thomas Christian Cemetery. He shared with us the information pertaining to the fund management of Cemeteries, "The Executive Committee is accountable to the general body for all the funds received (donations or in any other form) and spent, a unified balance sheet is published and is circulated to all the member of Churches".

He further added, "Our religion does not permit cremation but at the same time, a solution had to be sought for shrinking space. This way we can deal with the problem without comprising with our doctrine — that the body which is born from the earth has to go back to it. Even Christian organizations apprehensive in the beginning have now congratulated us and also accepted this practice".

He also shared with us the concept of the vertical cemetery. In this cemetery, two of the parallel walls have 150 cells divided into two levels of 75 cells each which are sealed with concrete from outside. Each cell measures six feet by two feet and every wall has 25 cells per row and six cells per column. Every cell has a number and name of the particular church for which it has been reserved.

The maximum number of cells has been reserved as follows:

Greater Delhi Pentecost Fellowship: 108

Delhi Orthodox Centre: 54

Jerusalem Mar Thoma Church: 24

The cells would take at least seven to eight years to be fully occupied, by that time the coffins containing the body will be converted into a thin paper form and only few bones of the body will remain. These would then be pushed down the pit to merge with the earth, in accordance with Christian doctrines.



d. CHRISTIAN CEMETERY (OPEN)

Location	This cemetery is located at Bihari Colony, Shahdra, Delhi
Classification	This cemetery is church-owned cemetery- Methodist and Baptist Churches

At present this cemetery is run by both Methodist and Baptist churches. Mr. John Biswas is the priest of Shahdra Methodist Church and is also a member of this Christian cemetery. When we visited him at the church he shared with us that the capacity of this cemetery is less than one acre and is almost utilized. He shared that they have a requirement for new land around their locality to suffice the requirement of the community.

e. SAINT JOHN'S CHURCH CEMETERY (Open)

Location	This cemetery is located at Mehrauli, New Delhi
Classification	This cemetery is church-owned (Church of North India)

This cemetery is Church owned and it caters only to the families of the members of the Church of North India and is confined not only to the Delhi CNI members but is also open for all the members of the diocese of CNI.

As per Leela Stella member of Church of North India the cemeteries all around Delhi is almost full and there is a need for at least 2,3 new cemeteries with proper facility.

She specified that member of CNI visit this cemetery from Paharganj, Mehrauli and Faridabad areas.

3.2 Community Owned/ Administered

a. NICHOLSAN CEMETERY (Closed)

Location	This cemetery is located at atmospheric colonial Christians, graveyard, Club Road, Civil Lines, New Delhi
Classification	This cemetery is a community owned cemetery which comes under the Delhi Cemetery Committee

Nicholson Christian Cemetery is a testimony to a history of violence. It was found after the Mutiny in 1857 and many of its inhabitants died in that conflict, now seen by some as the first war for independence. The cemetery is named after Brigadier

General John Nicholson, who was mortally wounded at the age of 36 leading the assault to relieve the siege of Delhi during the insurrection.

In Nicholson cemetery we met the caretaker family who were taking care of Cemetery from many years.

For the detailed information, we met *Rev. Fr. J. Rebello, Chairperson of the Delhi Cemetery Committee*, who supervises all the four Cemeteries in the city which come under Delhi Cemetery Committee.

The utilization capacity of this cemetery is already full and there is no more barren land left for the fresh burial due to which this cemetery was *closed in the year 2013*. One can get an essence of the historical information related to the Nicholson cemetery through the established monument of the Corcoran family (which helped in financing the St Mary's Church) which is falling apart.

Father Rebello stated that, "The reduction in burial space started about a decade back with increasing migration of Christian people to the city and no corresponding increase in the number of Cemeteries". He strongly felt that the cemetery management along with the authorized government institutions should think about this ever growing problem and come out with some effective measures to overcome the problem.



b. RAJPURA CEMETERY (Closed)

Location	This cemetery is located at Guru Tegh Bahardur Road, New Delhi
Classification	This is a community owned cemetery which comes under the Delhi Cemetery Committee

Out of the four Cemeteries which come under Delhi Cemeteries Committee, this is one of the cemeteries which are situated in an inhabited place. This cemetery is taken care by the caretaker and his family. We met them and discussed about the current situation of the cemetery and tried to gather other important information. They told us," *This cemetery was closed in 2012 due to unavailability of the vacant space for any more fresh burial*". As per them, the space has been fully utilized and there is no scope for any further fresh burial. Only "second burials" (doubling) are allowed –where the relatives move the Deceased's cremated remains to a niche and use the vacant lot for a new dead body. This cemetery is now encroached upon and poorly maintained.



c. YORK CEMETERY (Closed)

Location	This cemetery is located at A-3, Prithviraj Road, Near khan market, New Delhi
Classification	This is a community owned cemetery which comes under a committee known as Delhi Cemetery Committee

In this cemetery we met Mr. Toppo, incharge of Delhi Cemeteries Committee. The cemetery is in itself the main official and operational branch of Delhi Cemeteries Committee. *This cemetery was closed long back in 2006.*

Amongst all the Cemeteries this is most well maintained and green. Although the place is deserted today, there's no doubt that it's cared for devotedly. In the Cemetery, a tomb fashioned after a four poster bed, with pillars constructed at every corner and vines climbing around.



d. DELHI WAR CEMETERY (CLOSED)

Location	This cemetery is located at Delhi Cantonment, New Delhi
Classification	This is a community owned cemetery which comes under a committee known as Delhi Cemetery Committee

Delhi War Cemetery was created in 1951 when graves from many Cemeteries in northern India were moved into the site to ensure their permanent maintenance. Among them are graves from cantonment Cemeteries in Allahabad, Kanpur, Dehra Dun and Lucknow.

There are now 1,022 Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War buried, or commemorated by special memorial in this cemetery, together with a number of war graves of other nationalities, mostly Dutch. In 1966, 99 First World War burials were moved into the cemetery from Nicholson Cemetery, Kashmir Gate, Delhi, so that their permanent maintenance could be assured. Delhi War Cemetery also contains the DELHI 1914-18 MEMORIAL, which was built to commemorate 153 casualties buried in Meerut Cantonment Cemetery whose graves could no longer be maintained.

However, in recent years, the Commission has re-instated these graves. More than 25,000 servicemen of the forces of undivided India died during the Second World War in non-operational zones, for example while serving with regimental depots or with other static units. Their remains were accorded the last rites and disposal required by their various religions and their names are commemorated at memorials in the capital cities of India and Pakistan.

The DELHI 1939-45 WAR MEMORIAL forms the entrance to Delhi War Cemetery and an identical memorial stands in Karachi War Cemetery. No names appear on the memorials but a Roll of Honour at each site, one in Hindi, the other in Urdu, record the names of those commemorated. *The cemetery was closed a decade back in 1996.*



e. **INDIAN CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, BURARI (OPEN)**

Location	This cemetery is located at the By- pass road, Burari, New Delhi- 110009
Classification	This is a community owned cemetery which comes under a committee known as Indian Christian Cemetery Committee

This is considered as a very well maintained cemetery under the *Indian Christian Cemetery Committee*.

The prayer hall at Burari cemetery was constructed by the Indian Christian Cemetery Committee, New Delhi consecrated by Bishop Subodh C. Mondal, Bishop of Delhi regional conference and Agra regional conference Methodist church in India on 18th march 2014.

In *Burari*, we met Domnick Julius. He is a caretaker of Burari Cemetery. He mentioned that, "Burari is the only cemetery in Delhi which has huge capacity of land provided to Indian Christian Cemetery Committee which is approximately 5 acres". He further added that there is no other such fresh burial ground available anywhere in South/West Delhi and NCR, and this the main reason that though this place is quite far for the people residing in east and south delhi areas prefer to visit. He told us that, "Land for the Burari cemetery was provided 10 years ago." This is the newly allotted area for burial which has been given to Christian Community and could be used for next 20 years easily.

As on date this is the most popular cemetery among the Christian population as this has huge vacant space and is properly maintained.



f. INDIAN CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, PAHARGANJ (CLOSED)

Location	This cemetery is located at Nehru Bazar, Paharganj, New Delhi- 110055
Classification	This is a community owned cemetery which comes under a committee known as Indian Christian Cemetery Committee

In this cemetery, we met Rev. Dinesh Dass, pastor, designated as Vice-Chairman in Indian Christian Cemetery Committee, Paharganj. He informed us that, the cemetery is already closed long time back and now they are planning to focus on implementing new methods of resolving issues related to burial. The space for fresh graves ran out long back. There were already about 9,000 graves in Paharganj cemetery which were completely used. Earlier, they had also used the option of reusing graves — digging up the existing grave for second burial.



3.3 Others

a. LOTHIAN CEMETERY (CLOSED)

Location	This cemetery is located at Netaji Subhash Marg, Priyadarshini colony, Kashmiri Gate, New Delhi
Classification	This cemetery is managed by the Archeological Survey of India (Central Government)

According to INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage), this 1806 cemetery is the first British burial ground in Delhi. In a pocket of raised land next to Kashmiri Gate, this graveyard – though gated – is not locked, and has not aged gracefully.

There are constructions inside the cemetery and the ground is filthy. The most notable grave is the tomb of one Thomas Dunnes, constructed by Skinner.

Lothian Cemetery is located on Lothian Road that lies approximately half a kilometer from Kashmiri Gate, very close to the General Post Office in Kashmiri Gate in Old Delhi. On the north eastern side of the Railway Bridge, one can get a glimpse of this ancient British Cemetery that homes many graves including the members of the Christian community of Delhi who were buried here between 1808 and 1867. When one enters this cemetery there stands a huge and ancient Celtic Cross which is a Cross shaped design structure that symbolizes the crucifixion of Lord Jesus Christ and forms one of the main distinguished feature of this cemetery ground. This Celtic cross was constructed to mark the place as a Memorial ground of numerous European Soldiers who were killed during the first battle of Independence of India in 1857 also popularly known as the Sepoy Mutiny.

Today, the Lothian Cemetery is unfortunately seen in a dilapidated state and probably needs to be secured and recognized as a tourist site due to its historical significance and evidence.

This cemetery is now declared as a protected monument under Archeological Survey of India. On our visit to Archeological Survey of India, we met Mr. S. S. Rana, Assistant Archeologist. He mentioned that, "This Cemetery got declared as a tourist place and it was closed decade back during the time of British". He said that ASI (Archeological Survey of India) worked for the maintenance of the monument which comes under their authority.



b. LODHI ELECTRIC CREMATORIUM (OPEN)

Location	This cemetery is located at Lodhi road New Delhi
Classification	This is a private crematorium owned by Arya Samaj Jor Bagh Society, for both Hindu and Christian Community

This is a well-known place for cremation of the dead body. Its function is managed by Arya Samaj JorBagh Society, where both Hindus and Christian families come for the burial. The bodies of dead ones are cremated by Electric system. There are priests/Pujaris who carry out the burial process.

Here, we met Pandit Manish, who is one of the *pujaris*/priests. He discussed with us the details related to the use of electric cremation.

He said, “Yes, there are families of Christian community who come here to cremate the dead body of their loved ones as per their own customs and rituals. In order to perform the last rites as per the rituals of the Christian community, the family has to ask for the priest of their nearest church and bring him to the crematorium so the prayers could be done in a traditional way and finally, they can take the ashes with them to the ground burial.” He further added that, today few members of Christian community are also opting for the electric cremation; He mentioned that though electric system of cremation is used from long time ago, but as this accounts to huge electricity bill, this option has been closed in so many areas.



c. ALFA OMAGA CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, MANGOLPURI (OPEN)

Location	This cemetery is located at Vijay Vihar, Rohini near Mangolpuri, New Delhi- 110085
Classification	This cemetery is administered by Alfa Omega Christian Welfare Association (Regd.) affiliated to United Christian Forum North-West Delhi

In Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery, we met Pt. Rajan Gill. He mentioned that it is one of the poorest Cemeteries in town as it is located in un- inhabited area. Most of the families who visit this cemetery for the burial belong to the lowest socio- economic class. This place is even open for tribal and people from BPL category as well. They cemetery management does not charge anything for burials from the families however a sum of Rs. 500 is charged for the maintenance of the grave.

The condition inside the cemetery was not good enough, neither they are properly maintained nor cleanliness is seen anywhere. They are facing a lot of issues related to cemetery maintenance. The layout of cemetery is very small but is still counted as one of the operational cemetery in North Delhi. The caretaker told us that for their cemetery no proper amount is spent as it is taken care of by an NGO, therefore, it is difficult for them to maintain it properly. There are severe issues that this cemetery is facing, there is no proper protection of cemetery through embankments, no provision for clean water, electricity etc. on entering the cemetery, one can easily sense that all these are the genuine problems and needs to be addressed and resolved on urgent basis.



4. Interaction with Church leaders

INTERACTION WITH CHURCH LEADERS IN RELATION TO THE STATUS AND PROBLEMS OF THE CEMETERIES

In order to understand the issues and problems as encountered by the Cemeteries and their procedures we also met the church leaders. The details pertaining to the same are as mentioned below:

a. CHRIST METHODIST CHURCH

This church is located at Tis Hazari, Kashmiri Gate, New Delhi.

On visiting the church we met Rev. Sam Mishak, priest of Church. He told us that there are lots of issues and problems regarding the Cemeteries in Delhi which are not taken care of by any department. The number of Cemeteries catering the entire Christian population is insufficient and most of them are either full or closed. He was quite happy that Ullhas Foundation is working on this topic in association with the Delhi Minorities Commission and suggested us that sincere efforts should be made from the all designated departments for the remedial of the Problem of Cemeteries in Delhi and come up with some alternative measures to improve the current status of these Cemeteries.

We have duly interviewed him and a detailed questionnaire has been filled.

b. SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL CHURCH

This church is located at Rajiv Chowk.

We met Rev. Fr. J. Rebello, Chairperson of the Delhi Cemetery Committee, which manages four of the Christian Cemeteries in the city.

We have discussed in detail about the status and problem of the Cemeteries and the current requirement of the community in this regard. A questionnaire has also been filled.

c. ST. JAMES CHURCH

This church is located at Kashmiri gate, New Delhi.

In this church we met Fr. Mohit Hitter. He is also a part of *Diocese of Delhi*. He suggested us that ideally, there should be new town planning for the development of Cemeteries. He said, "We should do away with second burials, Commercialization of burials must be stopped, Churches should pay an annual fee to the cemetery and provision of ashes to be buried".

He also cooperated with us and shared the required information and filled in the questionnaire.

d. FREE CHURCH

This church is located at Patel chowk, New Delhi. We met and had a conversation with Rev. Suresh Kumar. He mentioned that Free Church is affiliated to Church of North India. He suggested that as per him one solution to this problem can be that the present Cemeteries should be relocated outside Delhi. This would help the associations, Churches, cemetery and the local people. However the feasibility of this approach needs to be verified with the land authorities.

e. MAR THOMA CHURCH CENTRE

This church is located at Paharganj, New Delhi.

This church comes under Delhi Diocese. Here we got a chance to meet Rev. Mr. Manoj Mathews, Bishop and dy. Section Secretary who is recently recruited here. As per him "There is a growing need of land for burial so new initiatives for burial should be followed to meet the growing requirements.

f. ST. LUKE'S CHURCH

This church is located at Defence Colony, New Delhi.

It is a Roman Catholic Church classified under Archdiocese of Delhi

In this Church we had a conversation with Rev. Fr. Balaraju Anthony Swamy, he is an assistant parish priest. As per him there are very few operational Cemeteries in Delhi due to which the people from the community face a lot of problem during the burial of the dead body. In addition to it they are also not maintained well. The major issue as per him is the maintenance of the land allotted for cemetery.

g. BAPTIST CHURCH

This church is located at Karol Bagh, New Delhi. We met *Rev. Dinesh Dass, pastor*. He is the acting Chairman of Indian Christian Cemetery Committee. He advised us that, "We need new and advance concepts for Cemeteries; also an awareness should be generated among the people of the community about the cremation process as an alternative for burial." He also agreed that the lack of land is a prominent issue for the Cemeteries in Delhi.

h. THE SALVATION ARMY

This church is located at Green Park, New Delhi. We met H. E. Rev. Colonel Wilfred Varghese, Territorial Commander at the Territorial Headquarter near the Church. He suggested us that, "Because of insufficient Cemeteries, there is an urge to find more places or lands for utilization of Cemeteries". He thinks if minority community will stand with Church leaders and support them; it can immensely bring a change and resolve the change related issue.

i. ST. MARY'S MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH

This church is located at Saket, Neb Sarai, New Delhi. In the church we met Fr. Philips. He is designated as a vicar and procurator of the Diocese of Gurgaon. He mentioned that like Tughlakabad cemetery, the process of making cellar system can really help to reuse the burial space for a family generation to generation. At last, he advised us that Minorities Commission should takes initiative to unite each Christian cemetery committee together, to find out problems and generate a suitable solution to it.

j. BELIEVERS CHURCH

This church is located at Hauz Khas, New Delhi. Here, we were supposed to meet Rt. Rev Dr. Simon John, but as the church is now shifted to Gurgaon, it became difficult to contact him. The new area allotted was very far in the outskirts of the city and it was quite difficult to reach there. Even on our second visit to the place, we were not able to meet the concerned person but we tried to enquire and fortunately we met the person who was a caretaker and he told us that, Dr. Simon John was out of city so despite of trying several efforts, we could not reach to the concerned person to get the information related to the subject.

k. DELHI ORTHODOX CENTRE

This church is located at Tughlakabad, New Delhi. The Church was closed because of refurbishment. On our second visit, the authority member informed us that the refurbishment will take around 6 months to complete and if desired, we can visit then to collect the information as required.

l. ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL

This church is located at Paharganj, New Delhi. This Church is located in an exclusive and well laid out site in the heart of Delhi, St. Peter's Cathedral is known to be the spiritual center of Syrian Orthodox Christians. This site was handpicked by Indira Gandhi, the late Prime Minister of India. It was on May 28, 1990 that this cathedral was designated as the "Eastern Cathedral of the Patriarch of Antioch" by H.H. Mar Ignatius Zakka I (the Patriarch).

We met Mr. Paul, one of the Bishops in this Church. He mentioned about the less availability of Cemeteries in the city and added that Minorities Commission should work as a supporter for their community to avail the facility and try to figure out the other issues with in community and suggest them to cope up with it. As a suggestion, they advised that Minorities Commission can request the DDA to allot more land for Cemeteries in the city.

m. CHURCH OF ST. TERESA OF CHILD JESUS

This church is located at Pushp Vihar, New Delhi. This is one of the Parishes of Delhi Archdiocese, established in the year 1975. In the church we met Father Keni

Phicomin Raj, Assistant Parish Priest.

He stated that the people from their locality prefer to visit St. Thomas Cemetery, Tuglakahabad but there is a need for few more cemeteries because as per him there are more than 8000 Catholic families residing in South Delhi.

n. ST.MARY'S ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

This church is located at Hauz Khaz, New Delhi. This church is open for Syrian Christians of Kerala. Father Shaji George is the Vicar of this church. As per him they are following the burial system so arrangements should be made to provide some more cemeteries to cater the needs of the Christian community residing in.

o. ST. JOHN'S CHURCH COMPOUND

This church is located at Mehrauli, New Delhi. St. John Church Mehrauli: Built in 1928, was designed by Alfred Coore of the Brotherhood of the Ascendant Church and is unique in the sense that its design combines the features of a church, a temple and a mosque.

In the church we met Rev. Barkat Masih, he shared with us that there is one cemetery in Mehrauli which is open only for Family members of Church of North India, so some more cemeteries are required for the Christian population residing in the area.

p. CHURCH (SHRINE) OF OUR LADY OF HEALTH

The church is located at Okhla, New Delhi. In the Church we met Fr. George Manimal; he told us that the nearest cemetery in this locality is the Okhla Cemetery under the Delhi Catholic Archdiocese.

It is one of the private Cemeteries and is only open for the Okhla based Catholic Parish families thus making it very restricted. He further suggested that there should be at-least one more cemetery in the area for the Christian community residing there.

q. ST. STEPHEN'S THE MARTYR

The Church is located at Chandni Chowk, New Delhi. The church was built in 1862, by Anglican missionaries and DPW Engineers in the style of Italian Gothic architecture. It is part of Church of North India Diocese of Delhi. The building of St. Stephen's Church was the Anglican mission Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

We met Rev. Timothy Shaw, presbyter-in-charge. As per him this area is predominated with the Roman Catholics and the nearby cemetery is Nicholson. This is closed for fresh burial and allows only the doubling so there is a need for one more cemetery in Central Delhi.

5. Information collected from management

Information required and collected from each community administration/ management

5.1 Management

The management as followed by each community in regards to the cemeteries is as under:

5.1.1 INDIAN CHRISTIAN CEMETERY COMMITTEE:

As per the information shared by Dominic Julier the care taker in Indian Christian Cemetery, the Christian population is mainly divided into four main communities i.e. Roman Catholic, Centenary Methodist Church, Baptist Church and Church of North India. The four Bishops from these communities supervise the entire management of both the Indian Christian Cemetery-Burari and Indian Christian Cemetery-Paharganj which come under the Committee.

The four Bishops select three representatives each from their community and thus a team of 12 members is formed who is a part of the administration team.

Bishops are the main authority who look after the management of committee and are the main decisions making body for the cemeteries management. The administration team adheres to the decision and follows them accordingly.

5.1.2 DELHI CHRISTIAN CEMETERY COMMITTEE:

As per the information shared by Fr. Rebello, Chairman Delhi Cemetery Committee, the members from different churches come together and form a committee which comprises of around 18-20 members. All these members adhere to the decisions taken by the Bishops in accordance to forming and finalizing the policies for management of the cemeteries which come under the committee. Timely meeting are conducted wherein all the Bishops and around 10-12 of the committee are present in it. During the meetings discussions are held, and policies are formed for the maintenance and management of cemeteries.

There are four cemeteries which come under the Delhi Cemetery Committee – Nicholson Cemetery, Rajpura Cemetery, York Cemetery, and Delhi War Cemetery.

5.1.3 MCD CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, DWARKA:

There is a huge capacity of land allotted by MCD to Christian Cemetery, Dwarka. To administer this cemetery, 180 church members of the society/association called

South west Delhi Christian Cemetery Association is formed. The members from the Church society/association constitute the General Body of the society. All the members of the General body elect the Governing Body of the Society. The strength of the Governing Body (including office bearers and executive members) their strength shall vary from 7-21.

The Governing Body shall be responsible for the management and administration of all the affairs of the society and also authorized to appoint any office bearers/representatives to look after any particular activities. The Governing Body meeting is held in three months regularly in which they discuss and prepare all the plans, programs and policies leading to the management of the cemetery and society.

5.1.4 ST. THOMAS CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, TUGLAQABAD:

This Cemetery is church-owned and administered by association of all local churches. The members of the association form a General Body who has the authority to take the important decision regarding the management of the Cemetery and formulate policies and plan as per the meeting held with all the members of the association.

5.1.5 OKHLA CEMETERY:

This Cemetery is owned by Masihgarh Church for the Okhla-based parish of Delhi Archdiocese. The members of the all local Churches come together and form an association which handles the management of the Cemetery. Regular meeting are held where all the members meet and discuss on the important agenda related to the maintenance, funding or any other and formulate policies and improvement plans to resolve them and ensure the smooth management of the cemeteries.

5.1.6 CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, SHAHADRA:

The management of this Cemetery is under the supervision of Baptist and Methodist Churches. The members of both the churches come together to form a Governing Body who have the authority to take decision regarding the management of the Cemetery. The members meet on regular intervals to discuss on various agenda and formulate the policies accordingly which are circulated to all the members and they have to adhere to them.

5.1.7 ST. JOHN'S CHURCH CEMETERY:

This cemetery is owned by Church of North India (CNI). The members of the Church Committee are responsible for the management of the Cemetery.

5.1.8 ALFA OMAGA CHRISTIAN CEMETERY:

This Cemetery is run by Alfa Omega Christian Welfare Association (Reg.) affiliated united Christian Forum North-West Delhi. This welfare association is an Ngo which

manages the functions of the Cemetery.

5.2 Rules and Regulations

Detailed discussions have been held with all the Church bodies and the Cemetery administration regarding the rule and regulations pertaining to their functioning. The details related to the rules and regulations as shared by the committee and the association is as summarized below and the documents as collected in this regard have been attached as annexure along-with the report.

5.2.1 DELHI CEMETERY COMMITTEE

We met Rev. Fr. J. Rebello, Chairperson of the Delhi Cemetery Committee, and requested him to share with us the rules and regulation as followed by the committee in regards to the cemetery but he was of the opinion that the rules and regulations are considered as the private and confidential documents which cannot be shared. On requesting him that these rules and regulation and other documents related to the Cemeteries form an important part of our study he suggested us that can be procured from the York Cemetery at Khan Market, Delhi on submitting an application.

We also shared the request letter and the official document as received from the Delhi Minorities Commission stating that the documents form an important and integral part of our study but unfortunately our request was rejected. We visited the York Cemetery in this regard but they could provide us these documents only after the approval of Father Rebello. We visited him again and requested for the document but he refused stating that these are the confidential documents which cannot be shared with anyone.

5.2.2 INDIAN CHRISTIAN CEMETERY COMMITTEE

We visited both the Indian Christian Cemetery at Paharganj and Burari to get the documents for the rules and regulation governing the Indian Christian Cemetery we spoke to Rev. Z.S Peters, former Chairman in the Paharganj Cemetery, who suggested us to speak to Rev. Samson Nath, Chairman Indian Christian Cemetery Committee He told us that we should submit a request letter addressing to Adv. George Tomes Secretary of the Committee for any communication in regards to the documents of the cemetery. They rejected our request stating that the rules and regulation are the important document of their committee and they cannot share it with anyone for any purpose. We tried convincing him a lot of times but they said they cannot help us in this regard.

5.2.3 ALFA OMAGA CHRISTIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION

In Alfa Omega Christian Welfare Association we met Pt. Rajan Gill, in-charge in Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery. He said that this cemetery is maintained and taken care by their Ngo. The rules and regulation as followed by welfare association were implemented on Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery. We shared the request letter with him to provide us the rules and regulation document but he said that the rules and regulation are private and confidential documents which cannot be provided to anyone except the members of the association.

5.2.4 SOUTH WEST DELHI CHRISTIAN CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

We visited the South West Delhi Christian Cemetery association and met Mr. C.M. Sathiabalan, General Secretary. He was very cooperative and helped us with all the details in regards to the Cemetery. The rules and regulation document as received is attached along.

5.2.5 ST. THOMAS CHRISTIAN CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Rev. Mathew Varghese is the Second Incharge in St. Thomas Christian Cemetery. On visiting the cemetery the care taker suggested us that we should meet him at the Church, we met him and told him about the study as assigned to us by the Delhi Minorities Commission. We requested him if he could share with us the documents as related to the cemetery management, rules and regulation or any other which would assist us in our work. He said that their management does not permit them to share the rules and regulation with anyone. On requesting him he, however, shared a Certificate of Registration with us.

5.3 ADMINISTRATION

All the Churches owned and community owned Cemeteries are administered by their own administration team, which administers all their burial process, fund management and maintenance of the Cemeteries and other day to day affairs. They maintain proper records of all the registered families who come to the respective Cemeteries for the Burial (Both Fresh or Doubling)

Administration team of each cemetery committee comprises of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Caretaker/in-charge.

ADMINISTRATION TEAM OF CHRISTIAN CEMETERIES IN DELHI					
Sr. No.	Name of Cemeteries	Name of the Chairman	Name of the Treasurer	Name of the Secretary	Name of the Caretaker/In-charge
1)	Delhi Cemeteries Committee	Rev. Fr. J. Rebello	Mr. V. E. Easo	Mr. Paul V. Joshua	Mr. Toppo
2)	Indian Christian Cemetery Committee	Rev. Samson Nath	Fr. Cirilo F. Rodrigues	Adv. George Tomes	Mr. Wilfred John
3)	Alfa Omaga Christian Welfare Association	Ptr. S.K. Tanden	-	Fr. Vinod Samuel	Ptr. Rajan Gill
4)	South West Delhi Christian Cemetery Association	-	Mr. Priscilla P. Prabhudas	Shri C.M. SathiaBalan (General Secretary)	Mr. DilBahadur
5)	St. Thomas Christian Cemetery Association	-	Mr. A. Donald	-	Rev. Mathew Varughese (2 nd Incharge)
6)	Okhla Cemetery	Mr. George Manimal	Mr. Christopher Fernandes	Mr. Jerry Bilung	Fr. Sukhdev

5.4 FACILITIES

All the Cemeteries provide similar facilities at the time of Burial to family members, they are as mentioned below.

- Coffin Box
- Ambulance
- An assistant to provide guidance for the burial process to the family.

5.5 FUNCTIONS

All the burial rituals are performed by the priest under the supervision of a representative of the committee.

5.6 CHARGES

The charges levied by the cemetery committee vary from each other. The details pertaining to the charges have been taken from the individual Churches and Cemeteries and are as mentioned below:

- a. Delhi Cemeteries Committee: The present charge is Rs. 600 per annum, Rs. 2,500.00 for 5 years, Rs. 12,000.00 (endowment) for 25 years. The cleaning fee covers only

the service of washing, wiping, cleaning the graves and monuments. The cemetery support is paid up to date at Rs. 200 per grave per annum (from the date of first burial).

- b. Indian Christian Cemetery Committee: Burial Charges for *Kacha* Grave: Rs. 2000, Burial Charges for Pacca Grave- Rs. 3500, Burial charges for small *kacha* grave: Rs. 1000, Full Cemented Grave up to Plate Form: Rs. 5000, Cemented Plate Form: Rs. 4500: Polished Coffin Box: Rs. 3500, Ordinary Coffin Cotten: Rs. 2500 and other items like Cemented Cross: Rs. 500.
- c. Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery Welfare Association: no charges are taken; only Rs. 500 charged for the maintenance of the grave.
- d. South West Delhi Christian Cemetery Association: Presently, Rs. 2500 for members and Rs. 5000 for non-members includes laying of sand stones.
- e. St. Thomas Christian Cemetery Association: Rs. 2000 is the land charge and Rs. 500 is the labour charge.
- f. Okhla Cemetery :- Rs.5000 is charged for the burial process
- g. St. John's Church Cemetery: - Rs. 200 per month is charged from all members of Church of North India.
- h. Christian Cemetery Shahadra: - Rs. 2000 is the land charge and Rs. 500 is the labour charge.

5.7 FUTURE PLAN OF ACTION

The feedback and the suggestions as shared by the bishops and the representatives of the churches and cemeteries regarding the future course of action are summarized as:

- Provisions for allotting fresh land for cemeteries should be made to reduce the problem of scarcity of space. An application in this regard has already been submitted to the government.
- The old practices of permanent grave should be disposed off and in place of it; *kacha* method shall be used.
- Bones to be saved into niches. Where the dead body is decomposed in 3,4 days and later their bones are placed into a 2x2 grave.
- Re-use of graves should be allowed after seven years only for the people with a family member already buried in the cemetery

- To constraint crypt system, because as per their belief the dead body is not getting decomposed in the natural way rather they are getting mixed up with the other dead bodies and are decomposing together which hurts their emotions and sentiments.
- There is a strong urge to understand and come up with new measures to help the Christian population in Delhi as, in the future all the existing cemeteries are going to be overfilled and they shall also be done with the doubling and

5.8 CAPACITY AND VACANCIES

- The details and the capacity of the Cemeteries have been discussed and noted down in the questionnaire attached. The information reveals that
- Most of them are already full/closed for fresh burial.
- Maximum capacity of provided land has been utilized.
- There is no vacant land present as of now with almost all the cemeteries except the new cemeteries i.e. the Indian Christian Cemetery, Burari, M.C.D Christian Cemetery, Dwarka where the fresh burial can be done.

5.9 PROCEDURE OF BURIAL

The formal procedure for the burial of the dead body and the preceding rituals to it have been discussed and noted down in the questionnaire. The details of it are mentioned below:

After the absolution, the body is carried to the grave. The tomb or burial plot is then blessed. This blessing is short and consists only of a single prayer after which the body is again sprinkled with holy water and incensed. The final petition made by the priest is "May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace." At that point, the graveside ceremony and the burial are completed.

5.10 DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR BURIAL

The documents and all the paper work as required at the time of the burial are as mentioned below:

- Declaration letter from the priest or Church to which the member belongs.
- ID Proof of the family member.
- Doctor's certificate mentioning the cause of death.
- Death certificate for the record of Christian Community Priest or Community Administration, in case of accident, LMC (Legal Medical Case) is mandatory.
- In case of the doubling (second burial) the family has to fill a doubling form
- In the accidental case a letter from the Police is also required.

The documents as collected are attached in annexure

5.11 WHOM TO CONTACT

The names and details of the contact person for the burial and related procedures in different cemetery committee are as mentioned below:

CONTACT PERSON FOR THE BURIAL AS PER THE CEMETERIES			
Sr. No.	Name of the Cemeteries	Contact Person	Contact number
1.	Delhi Cemeteries Committee	Mr. Toppo	09210894466
2.	Indian Christian Cemetery Committee	Mr. Domnic Julius	09810060128
3.	Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery Welfare Association:	Ptr. Rajan Gill	09899322946
4.	South West Delhi Christian Cemetery Association	Mr. Dil Bahadur	09654335991
5.	St. Thomas Christian Cemetery Association	Rev. Mathew Varughese	09818482781
6.	Okhla Cemetery	Fr. Sukhdev	02682-1050
7.	St. John's Church Cemetery	Rev. Barkat Masih	
8.	Christian Cemetery, Shahadra	Fr. John Biswas	09718821065

5.12 COPY OF FORMS AND DOCUMENTS FOR BURIAL

Copy of all the required forms and documents as shared are duly collected and attached in the annexure 2 of the original report submitted to DMC.

These documents have been provided by the cemetery committees and association are Registration Certificate, Rules and Regulation, copy of the documents as required at the time of burial etc.

6. PROVISIONS OF MASTER PLAN 2021 (MPD 2021)

As per Master Plan for Delhi 2021, cremation grounds, burial grounds and cemeteries fall under social infrastructure in regards to which provisions made which are as follows:

6.1 LAND USE PLAN

In order to control the development in Delhi, the MPD 2021 classified land broadly in nine categories of land uses namely Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Transportation, Utility, Government, Public and Semi-Public Facilities and Agriculture and Water Body. Cemeteries fall under the category Public and Semi-Public facility.

AREAWISE LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Area-wise distribution of different land uses given in the MPD 2021 is as under:

LAND USE	% OF LAND
Residential	45-55
Commercial	3-4
Industrial	4-5
Green/Recreational	15-20
Public and Semi Public Facilities	8-10
Circulation	10-12

Source: Delhi Urban Area 2021-DDA

6.2 HIERARCHY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

As per MPD 2021 the hierarchy of Urban Development is mention as under, where it is seen that Cemeteries are included only in the district land level and Zonal Level.

S.No	LEVEL	FACILITIES	Area in sqm		
			No.	per unit	total
1.	Housing Area Population –5,000	Primary School/Middle School	1	2,000	2,0000
		Milk Booth	1	As per std design of conc..dept	As per std design of conc..dept
		Convenient Shopping	1	1,000	1,000
		Totlot	20	125	2,500
		Housing Area Park	1		5,000

		Housing Area Playground	1	5,000 5,000	5,000
2.	Neighborhood Population- 10,000	Sr. Secondary School	1	6,000	6,000
		Religious building	2	400	800
		Electric Sub Station 11 KV		As per req.	As per Req.
		Multipurpose Community hall (provision for marriages, small public gathering, function, eating joint and library etc.)	1	2,000	2,000
		Local shopping	1	3,000	3,000
		Service Market	1	2,000	2,000
		Informal Bazaar	1	1,000	1,000
		Three wheeler and Taxi Stand	1	400	400
				10,000	10,000
		Neighborhood Park	1	10,000	10,000
		Underground water tank	1	2,000	2,000
		Dhalao including segregation	1	200	200
		Local level waste water treatment facility			
				Wherever feasible	
3.	Community Population- 1,00,000	Hospital 'C' (101 beds and 200 beds)	1	5,000 - 10000	5,000-10000
		Hospital 'D' (up to 100 beds)	1	2,500-5,000	2,500-5,000
		Family Welfare Centre	2	500-800	1,000-1,600
		a Pediatric Centre			
		b Geriatric centre			
		c Diagnostic centre			
		Maternity Home (up to 50 beds)	2	1,000-2,000	2,000-4,000
		Nursing Home/ Polyclinic (upto 50 beds)	2	1,000-2,000	1,000-2,000
		Dispensary for pet animals and birds	1	300	300
		School for Mentally/ Physically challenged	1	2,000	2,000
		Police Post	1	1,000	1,000
		Community Recreational club	1		

		Socio-Cultural activities (auditorium, music, dance and drama centre/ meditation and spiritual centre)	1		
		Banquet Halls	3	LPG	godown per 1 lakh pop.
		LPG Godwns			21,600
		SKO/ LDO outlet	As per standard		40,000
		Electric sub- station 66 KV	2		70,000
		Community Centre	1		
		Community Park			1,0800
		a Park	1		40,000
		b Multipurpose	1		30,000
		Park/ground	1		1,000
		Community Sports Centre	1		50,000
		Bus Terminal	1		20,000
			1		30,000
			1		1,000
		Waste water treatment facility			
			As per	require-ment	
4.	District Population- 5,00,000	Hospital 'A' (501 beds and above)	1	25,000	25,000 45000
		Hospital 'B' (201 beds to 500 beds)	2	45000	
		Veterinary Hospital for pet animals and birds	1	15,000-25000	30,000-50000
		Vocational Training Centre: ITI/ Polytechnic/ Vocational Training Institute	1	2,000	2,000
				4,000	4,000
		General College	1	as per the nor concern ed	norms of the professional governing bodies
		Professional College (Engineering)	1	As per the	AICTE norms
		Police Station	2	5,000	10,000
		Fire Station (5 to 7 km radius)	3	10,000	30,000
		Old Age Home	1	1,000	1,000
		Care Centre for Physically/ Mentally challenged	1	1,000	1,000
		Working women-men hostel	1	1,000	1,000

		Night Shelter	1	1,000	1,000
		Adult Education Centre	1	1,000	1,000
		Orphanage/ Children's centre (one each)	1	40,000	40,000
		Electric sub- station 220 KV	1	400,000	400,000
		District Centre	1	60,000	60,000
		Service Market	1	2,000	2,000
		Bus Terminal	1	4,000	4,000
		Bus Depot			2,90,000
		District park	1	2,50,000	
		a park	1	40,000	
		b Multipurpose ground/ Park	1	0	1,00,000
		District Sports Centre	1	1,00,000	5,000
		Recreational club	1	5,000	10,000
		<i>Cremation ground</i>		10,000	
5.	Zonal/ Sub City Population - 10,00,000	Medical College	1	As per Medical India /	Medical Council of Ministry of
		Nursing and Paramedic Institute	1	2,000	Health norms 2,000
		Telephone Exchange	1	2,500	
		RSU (Remote Subscribe Unit)	1 for 3 km radius 1	300	2,500 300
		Sub City Wholesale Market		1,50,000	1,50,000
		Bus Depot	1	As	Required
		Head Post Office and Adm n. Office	1	per	2,500
		Sewage Pumping Station	1		
		Municipal Office for water and sewerage	1	2,50	2,500 1,000
		Sewerage Treatment Plant (180 mld)	1	0	2,34,000
		City Park	1	2,500	
		a. Park	1	1,000	10,80,000
		b. Multipurpose ground			
		c.Divisional Sports Centre	1	2,34,000	3,00,000
		d. Burial ground/Cemetery		10,00,000 80,000 0 3,00,000	10,000
				10,000	

Source: As per DDA Plan for Delhi 2021

6.3 OTHER PROVISIONS OF MPD 2021 PERTAINING TO CEMETERIES/BURIAL GROUND

At present there are 59 Cremation grounds and 4 graveyards (qabristans) of the MCD and Delhi Waqf Board burial grounds.

- I. In the existing cremation grounds, provision of crematorium is to be made.
- II. In proposed urban extension new burial grounds/crematorium/cremation grounds/cemetery etc are planned with proper parking and landscape provisions. The plot area to be about 0.4 Ha. per 5 lakh population for a cremation ground and up to 1.0 Ha. per 10 lakh population for a cemetery and burial subject to availability of land.

Source: Master Plan-2021

6.4 ACTIVITIES PERMITTED IN THE CREMATION/BURIAL GROUND AND CEMETERY AS PER MASTER PLAN-2021

Sl. No.	Use Premises	Definitions	Activities Permitted
1.	Burial ground	A premise with facilities for burying of dead bodies	Burial ground, Cremation ground, Cemetery, Crematorium, retail shop, wood, flowers and related materials. Watch & Ward Residence up-to 20 sqm)
2.	Cremation ground	A premise with facilities of performing last rites of dead bodies by burning	Burial ground, Cremation ground, Cemetery, Crematorium, retail shop, wood, flowers and related materials. Watch & Ward Residence up-to 20 sqm)
3.	Cemetery	A premise with facilities for burying of dead bodies	Facility for registration of deaths, sheds for performing rituals, drinking water parking, etc.
4.	Crematorium	A premise with facilities for last rites of the deceased	Facility for registration of deaths, sheds for performing rituals, drinking water parking, etc

Source: Master Plan for Delhi 2021

7. PROVISIONS OF BUILDING BY LAWS

PROVISIONS OF BUILDING BY LAWS AS APPLICABLE TO SPECIAL REQUIREMENT FOR OCCUPANCY/ LAND DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER FOR BURIAL AND CREMATION GROUNDS

The provisions of building by laws as applicable to special requirement for occupancy/land development including burial and cremation grounds states that, the Authority shall under the provisions of their Regulations/Acts, regulate the location and area limits of the burial and cremation grounds, including cemetery. The Authority shall Permit/prohibit burial and cremation grounds to be located in certain area layouts, after scrutiny of the proposal with respect to health and well being surrounding neighborhood and shall follow the selection criteria given below:

- a) The proposed development in terms of land use has to be compatible with the ground;
- b) Compatible land uses have to be planned with regards to prevailing wind direction and beyond the buffer zone as given in section 4.23.5. The likely direction of drift in the event of odor has to be accounted while planning the layout.
- c) Adequate land area has to be provided to house furnaces, and for internment of cremated remains;
- d) The site has to have proper accessibility by the local road network.

8. Summary of Discussions with Officials of Land Agencies

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS/MEETINGS WITH OFFICIALS OF LAND AGENCIES

8.1 Delhi Development Authority (DDA)

Meeting with the Commissioner Planning DDA Mr. Sanjay Pathak, he explained that Delhi is divided into 15 zones each headed by a Director (Area Planning) who demarcates the distribution of land under his zone for different land uses as per provision of the MPD 2021 and as per specific requirements/demands of the local population. The overall coordination is done by Director (Master Plan).

As per the meeting and discussion with *Mr Rajesh Kumar Jain (Director-Master Planning development and Land Pooling (MPDLP), Dr. Meena Vidhani (Assistant Director – PLG (MP))*, Ms Manisha Gupta (Sr. Arch (WZ & Dwk)) there are two main Land owning agencies

- a. Land and Development Organization (LNDO).
- b. Delhi Development Authority (DDA).

DDA is the main Land Allotment Authority as most of the land falls under its jurisdiction. The LNDO area is very restricted and the land under it is almost exhausted.

He further mentioned that the process of land allocation for Cemeteries / Burial Grounds in DDA, is a two way process as follows:

- i. Infrastructure-based Planning: The new proposed areas are planned as per the residing population (zonal level / City level).

As per the MPD 2021 provisions there should be 1 cemetery/ Burial Ground on every 10 lakh populations for which the area proposed is 4 acres.

- ii. Need Based Planning -Depending upon the demand from the community, a request is sent to the Director (Area Planning). He assesses the need of Cemeteries/ Burial Grounds visa vis other Social Infrastructure requirements like Schools, Hospitals, petrol Pumps etc. in the requested area. If the requirement is justified then the official explores the site and prepares the layout plan and sends it further to the

Screening department for approval. Once it is approved, it is sent to Institutional Land department for Formal Allotment to MCD or local Communities/NGO on Subsidized rates.

Once the allotment is done for Cemetery/ Burial Grounds the maintenance is taken care by the MCD or the community/NGO. The funds required for the maintenance has either to be managed through Charity/ Donations received or the committee has to request the funds from the area MLA.

8.2 NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (NDMC)

As per the meeting and discussion with Mr. Neeraj Bharti (Director) and Mr. Rakesh Goyal (Chief Architect) though NDMC is a land owning authority but has very restricted area of around 43.7 sq km. At present the area under them is only for commercial use and they do not have any Christian Cemetery/ Burial Ground under them. They have only one Parsi cemetery under them which is situated opposite to Taj Mansingh Hotel.

8.3 MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI (MCD)

As per the meeting and discussion with Mr. GS Meena (Additional Commissioner, South Delhi Municipal Corporation) and Dr. LR Verma (Additional Municipal Health Officer), they have their own land and also the land allotted by DDA.

Cremation grounds/Burial Grounds are maintained by MCD. They informed that there are 3 divisions in MCD under which the cemeteries fall:

North Delhi Municipal Corporation: It includes all the areas in North and North-West Delhi and Central Delhi. Alfa Omega Christian Cemetery comes under North Delhi MCD.

South Delhi Municipal Corporation: Except for the Delhi Cantt area, all the areas under South and South-West Delhi and West Delhi are included in it. MCD Christian Cemetery Dwarka is owned by South Delhi Municipal Corporation itself, but they have handed over this cemetery now to an association for further administration.

East Delhi Municipal Corporation: Regions of North East and East Delhi come under its umbrella. There are no cemeteries in this area under MCD.

8.4 LAWS APPLICABLE FOR LAND AGENCIES (NDMC AND MCD)

There are certain laws applicable governing the supervision of cemeteries, these include:

- i. Power to call for information regarding burning and burial grounds: The Chairperson may, by notice in writing, require the owner or person in charge of any burning or burial ground to supply such information as may be specified in the notice concerning the condition, management or position of such ground.
- ii. PERMISSION FOR USE OF NEW BURNING OR BURIAL GROUND:
 - a. No place which has not been used as a burning or burial ground before the commencement of this Act shall be so used without the permission in writing of the Chairperson.
 - b. Such permission may be granted subject to any conditions which the Chairperson may think fit to impose for the purpose of preventing any Annoyance to, or danger to the health of, any person residing in the Neighbor-hood.
- iii. Power to require closing of burning and burial grounds:
 - a. Where the Chairperson, after making or causing to be made local inquiry is of opinion that any burning or burial ground has become offensive to, or dangerous to the health of, persons residing in the neighborhoods, he may, with the previous sanction of the Council, by notice in writing, require the owner or person in charge of such ground to close the same from such date as may be specified in the notice.
 - b. No corpse shall be burnt or buried at the burning or burial ground in Respect of which a notice has been issued under this section.
- iv. REMOVAL OF CORPSES
The Chairperson may, by public notice, prescribe routes by which alone corpses may be removed to burning or burial ground.
(Source: NDMC act 1994, section 300)

8.5 PRICE FOR ALLOTMENT OF LAND FOR CEMETERIES

As per the discussion with Mr Kamal Joshi (Director-Land & Costing) DDA, the land is allotted to Cemeteries at Zonal Variant Rates. The government does not charge market price for these and the rates are pre-determined and subsidized (no profit no loss basis). The Allotment for Cemeteries are provided at rates as under:

ZONE	MULTIPLIER USED	Rate/ Acre (in lakhs)
Central, South and Dwarka	(4.5 times of no profit no loss rate)	Rs. 2228.00
West, North, East Zone and Rohini	(3 times of no profit no loss rate)	Rs. 1485.33
Narela and Outlying areas	(2 times of no profit no loss rate)	Rs . 990.22

9. Conclusion and Suggestions

First of all we would like to mention here that working on this project has been very informative and has helped us to understand the present scenario and the problems as faced by the Christian Communities during the burial of the dead bodies of their loved ones. We also got an excellent opportunity to know more about the Christian religion through meeting and interviewing the Bishops and representatives of Christian Community.

We have made all the possible efforts to bring out the major issues being faced by the Christian community with regards to the cemeteries including their status, allotment and maintenance.

We have also tried to capture the best practices followed around the world.

9.1 International best practices of management and governance of Cemeteries

From an international perspective, it would be continuous development of the modern cemetery. Its environmental and societal consequences, is the function and planning of Cemeteries and other burial places in metropolitan areas. Whether it is national or international, 'Cemetery administration' is understood as the organization responsible for cemetery operations and management, more or less integrated in the church parish organization. Cemeteries are furthermore public green spaces by definition, in the sense they are open to the public and their purpose is one of general service to the local community.

- The cemetery, in Denmark and elsewhere, can be defined as the expression of various coexisting interpretive landscapes, in the sense it is a physical space and a perceived space, where the latter is not as easily defined and agreed upon as the former subsequent its subjective nature. The consequence of this is a cemetery landscape consisting of intermingled landscapes of meaning and function with sometimes conflicting values. The Danish cemetery constitutes a

Special interpretation where Cemeteries are administered by the national church, and have evolved from the old churchyards and included cremation as well as natural burial tendencies. The Cemeteries are characterized by high standards in design and horticultural maintenance, due to hitherto sufficient finances. Danish Cemeteries are, rightfully, perceived as public green spaces with special qualities. Due to changes in burial patterns and other societal changes excess capacity and unused grave-types has been and emerging trend on many Cemeteries.

- The following chart shows some of the functions multiple-use Cemeteries have been put to in Australia, Egypt and the United States:

CEMETERY	FUNCTIONING
Pinnaroo Cemetery Perth, Australia	After-funeral catering: Pinnaroo Cafe- A 70-seat cafe is open seven days a week to all members of the public; Facilities built from local materials including limestone and WA jarrah hardwood.
Cairene cemetery: City of the Dead, Cairo, Egypt	Residential areas: Overnight stays by families who visit the deceased; apartments for permanent stay by cemetery residents whose livelihoods are derived from burial activities; shows signs of rich architectural and urban history; The curing of a certain disease or the fulfilment of a particular type of wish.
Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum, Ohio U.S. National Historic Landmark	Includes fine arts, architecture, education programs; Attracts photographers, bird watchers, students always visit cemetery because of its arboretum; Involvement in studies and projects mainly on horticulture; Hosts weddings, fun walks and runs.
Green Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, USA (a National Historic Landmark in 2006)	A tourist destination, visitors' centre and museum/ exhibition space, birdwatchers, ticketed tours to picnic, bike, hike and just sit in the peaceful quietness; Whiskey-tasting nights, theatre performances

Source: Slide 9 in Tsepang Leuta presentation "Effective Management of Cemeteries" to National Cemeteries Management Workshop, 29 October 2014.

- The city of Johannesburg is taking steps to ensure that current and new Cemeteries will offer more sustainable burial options. The City of Johannesburg is also encouraging aboveground burials, in mausoleums. The City of Cape Town has begun a pilot project offering mausoleums and modular crypts as burial options,

while the city of Ekurhuleni is currently investigating the possibility of introducing modular crypts as an alternative burial option.

- In London, rather than continually to seek new land for burial as existing Cemeteries fill up, the more effective solution might be to re-use existing burial grounds as part of a managed and coordinated approach to the provision of local burial facilities. This approach was also seen as a way of reversing the need to locate new Cemeteries further and further away from the communities they served. In addition, by enabling Cemeteries to become a renewable resource, they might go some way to relieve local taxpayers of the constant financial demands of existing cemetery maintenance.

RE-USE OF OLD GRAVES IN CEMETERIES WAS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED AS A WAY TO:

- (a) Relieve pressure on open land, particularly in London.
- (b) Provide burial facilities closer to the relevant communities.
- (c) Generate income to maintain existing Cemeteries.

- This ever-growing estrangement from the “culture” of cemeteries has led to burial being seen as a waste of space in Singapore. Moreover, now that remains are almost certain to be exhumed eventually, more people are opting for cremation in the first place. Almost everyone, in other words, except for people whose religions specifically dictate burial.
- In the United Kingdom, for almost 20 years now, a compelling new consumer movement has been underway. Natural burial grounds — where people are buried in biodegradable containers, without formaldehyde-based embalming fluid or synthetic ingredients, and returned to the earth to compost into soil nutrients with a forest of trees marking the spot—are springing up across this island nation.
- Side by side with this public front are an equally dynamic group of forward-thinking business entrepreneurs and artisan-manufacturers. Some are producing attractive biodegradable burial vessels made from natural and recycled materials, while others are pioneering natural burials by starting modern "eco-Cemeteries" around the world, dedicated to modeling the perfection that a natural "heaven on earth" might look like if it were here.
- Good Practices in cemetery management in accordance with South African Local Government (SALGA): As per SALGA it was agreed that best practices in regard

to the cemetery management should also be linked to good practices which shall be a great measure to minimize the concerns and problems as faced in the Cemeteries. Some of the good practices as suggested are as follows:

- a. Improving safety and security in Cemeteries: in order to deter the assaults on the visitors to the Cemeteries and prevent the theft and vandalism of the Cemeteries, which is particularly the case in passive Cemeteries where burial activity has ceased and traffic is reduced. The number of security officers and patrols should be increased.
- b. Outsource functions in cemeteries , as per the budget: The management has service-level agreement with the grave diggers, which means that the graves can be dug when required, 24 hrs a day, thus providing better service to the society
- c. Create jobs through collaborating with the public work department-Low skilled labour in Cemeteries can be provided by communities adjacent to Cemeteries.
- d. Electronic funds transfer should replace cash payments to cemetery officers for funeral services
- e. Funeral records should be managed properly to avoid any ambiguity
- f. Using computerized management software to avoid any misplacement of any data or entry.
- g. Funeral procedures should be streamlined and made more efficient.

9.2 National Best Practices of Management and Governance of Cemeteries

In terms of national best practices, they are organizing quite a few cremations for Christians every year. But most people still prefer burial, so the solution lies in creating *kuchha* (mud) graves rather than *pucca* (concrete) graves in Cemeteries. Kuchha graves can be reused in 5-6 years; besides such graves bring down the cost of funeral.

In the Cemeteries in Kerala there is no longer enough space to bury the dead, concrete vaults which can serve families for generations are being built in many Churches even as many Christians protest that it is not in keeping with the Biblical faith of man returning from dust to dust. Most Christians now realize how pragmatic it is. Even rich families cannot buy space for individual graves as many Churches refuse permission even for fancy amounts. So more and more families are now constructing family vaults but again only where Churches are ready to sell space. In crowded Cemeteries where a multi-vault burial system has been built, some vaults are reserved for sale to families. Out of the 36 vaults that

the St Thomas Church in Tiruvalla has built, the topmost row of 12 vaults has been reserved for sale to families.

As in China, the use of “bunk-graves” may be started if cremation for burial won’t be accepted by the Christian community in Mumbai and Kolkata. No more permanent graves are allowed now in both the cities because of insufficient land for cemeteries. Perhaps it won't be long before one hears of bunk graves. The graves of monks at Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire have been discovered to be laid out bunk-bed style, with bodies.

9.3 FEASIBILITY OF ECO-CEMETERY CONCEPT

The eco-cemetery represents the idea of rapid return of the corpses to nature and non-polluting burial methods and cemetery planning. It envisages Environmental sustainability and recycling in natural ways. It proposes new methods that decrease the amount of wood, steel or other metals used in making coffins, and that prevent pollution of the environment with chemical treatments of the corpse during burial. It also encourages protection of the natural landscape, as well as the fauna and the flora at the time of planning the cemetery and choosing its location.

The main purpose of eco-Cemeteries is to decrease the negative impacts of the Cemeteries on the underground water, natural vegetation and fauna existing in the burial area, using materials that biodegrade more rapidly and minimize the ecological footprint of the individual. Bodies in eco-cemeteries are usually buried in a casket made of cardboard or wicker, or simply in a shroud.

Eco-Cemetery planning in international level has had to take into account the decomposition process which occurs in a burial site, and situate Cemeteries so as to realize the best micro-environment conditions to increase the rate of decomposition prior to the expiry of the burial rights. The legislation addresses the topography of the area and the chemical and physical characteristics of the soil. The law establishes the expiry of burial rights granted on the basis of realised micro-environment characteristics, in order to reuse the sites. This has come about as a result of environmental concerns about in-ground burial.

While discussing with the Church leaders as their opinion about feasibility of eco cemetery concept, they believed that this concept is quite feasible in Delhi

and will be highly appreciated. It will be better to make a box system in order to manage the wastage of land.

The grieved families have their sentiments and emotions towards their deceased graves, so appropriate steps should be taken while not disturbing the traditions of their local community and should be given due respected. However, the final choice should be left to the members of the grieved family.

Many of the Christian organization leaders accepted the fact of applying eco cemetery concept more in India and they believed that their method of burial is itself so eco-friendly. All our Cemeteries are mainly prepared and taken care of by its committee by planting trees and grass inside it. They make sure that the inner atmosphere of Cemeteries should be properly taken care of and there should be more greenery around. Protection of environment should be considered by the Church leaders while going through the procedure of burial.

9.3.1 BENEFITS OF THE ECO-CEMETERY

Eco- Cemetery serves a couple of purposes. They allow people to choose a natural burial option, and they also serve as a way to protect and conserve land. Most green Cemeteries form a partnership with land conservation groups.

Green Cemetery/Eco Cemetery is cheaper and more sustainable. They are not as densely packed as regular Cemeteries. Instead of traditional headstones, unpolished, locally sourced rocks are sometimes used to identify and remember the dead. Concrete vaults are not used, rather settling and sinking is prevented by mounding dirt at the site.

The landscape of a green cemetery utilizes native species and helps to restore the natural ecosystem of a given location. Many green memorial parks are designed to be multi-use facilities where people can enjoy nature as well as remember those who have died.

Eco Cemeteries are unique because they do not use headstones, markers or mausoleums. Green Cemeteries also lack the traditionally well-manicured, fertilized lawns and paved driving paths in exchange for a more natural, native landscape.

The concept of a green burial/Eco burial sounds a little strange to a lot of people today. However, modern funeral and burial practices are a relatively recent tradition. Green burials were the norm throughout most of our history, and in Europe greener funeral practices are used out of necessity due to limited space. In

the United States, land for burials has been easy to come by, delaying the need for greener burial tradition.

9.4 MAINTENANCE, FUND MANAGEMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY/TRANSPARENCY

Based on the meetings and discussion with the cemetery members, Bishops and other officials we have received the following feedback with respect to the maintenance, fund management, accountability/Transparency of the cemeteries.

Maintenance: Each cemetery has an Executive Committee/Board which has an administration team comprising of members from all the community these are responsible for the maintenance of the Cemeteries. They have to take proper care of the cleanliness, infrastructure and other basic amenities and ensure that they are properly managed and all the functions of the cemetery are run in the desired manner.

Fund Management: The members of administration team are required to keep all the records of the cost incurred in the maintenance of the cemetery, salaries to be paid, donation received and expenses on running of the cemeteries.

Accountability: There is a proper audit done every year to ensure the accountability of all the records. This ensures the transparency in fund management.

Transparency: For the maintenance and accountability in fund management, every church/cemetery is required to keep its day to day activity informed to their respective Committee.

- Some of the members of Church committee also suggested that there should be separate managing committee and a finance committee for each cemetery.
- Every Christian citizen should have access to the accounts and use of funds.
- A consultative committee should be constituted by each Parish/Priest who can advise on fund management and other issues.
- The Executive committee should be accountable to the general body and an audited balance sheet must be published to all the church members.

9.4 SUGGESTIONS for role of Minorities Commission

We would like to share our suggestions with the Minorities Commission on the basis of our conversation and feedback received from the authorities and bishops in the churches and cemeteries visited. These are summarized below:

- Minorities Commission should take initiative to bring all the Christian cemetery committees together and make one platform to identify ground level problems of community with their solutions.
- There is an over growing need of space for burial and to adopt modern initiatives and best practices to meet the growing requirement of the community. The Minorities Commission should take initiatives to create awareness among the community regarding such best practices as followed worldwide.
- The Minorities Commission should regulate the fee charges in the Cemeteries for the burial of the dead bodies for the poor families.
- The Minorities Commission should convene meetings with the committee authorities of the churches in order to frame new policies and ideas and Concepts for the burial for the promotion of the eco-friendly cemeteries and new ways for maintaining them.
- The Minorities Commission should convene meetings with the members as well as with the Bishops and authority of the cemeteries on the issue of requirement of cemeteries and steps to minimize the problems of the Cemeteries and improve their conditions.
- The Minorities Commission should conduct awareness programs with the help and assistance of the Bishops for the Christian community to introduce them to the practice of cremation. As per our discussions with the Bishops and the community experts they also agree to this and have shared the same views in the questionnaire.
- The Minorities Commission should stand behind the Church leaders in regards to the condition and problems of the Cemeteries and support Christian community in all the possible ways to improve and request DDA to allot land for at-least 4-5 more cemeteries in different parts of Delhi.

9.6 OUTCOME OF THIS STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE

The inferences as drawn from the survey and meeting held with the Bishops, officials from the Christian community and Cemeteries and DDA, NDMC, MCD are as follows:

- The Christian population is widely distributed all around Delhi while the numbers of cemeteries are quite less; moreover they are not distributed evenly in all parts of the city due to which majority of the people face problems as they have to travel far for burials. For instance people from Central Delhi have to go all the way to Burari or Dwarka.
- In most of the cemeteries there is no more space available for burials. So it is becoming very difficult for the cemetery management to accommodate more dead bodies.
- It has also been found that many of the cemeteries have closed due to lack of space, and are only open for the doubling and few are open for the Specific church community. The open cemeteries for people from all the Christian Community as of now are St. Thomas Cemetery Tuglakahabad, Indian Christian Cemetery Burari, MCD Christian Cemetery Dwarka, Alfa Omega Cemetery Mangolpuri, Christian Cemetery Shahdara which have space available with them and are open for all while two other cemeteries Okhla Cemetery and St. John's Cemetery Mehrauli are open only of the pastor family and the family member of Church of North India.
- As of now there are two main cemeteries out of five which are open and operational for the new burial i.e. Burari, Dwarka, Tughlakabad as they have more space. So there is an urgent need to take appropriate action and imply new laws if possible for the allotment of land for Cemeteries or else promote and adopt new and eco friendly modern techniques and modes of burial.
- There are lot of problems and issues related to the maintenance of the cemeteries including those of sewage, water logging, insufficient electricity supply, cleanliness etc.
- There also exists funding issues with the cemetery management as the available funds are very limited and majority of them depend only on the funds provided by the Christian families.

MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN REGARDING THE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT:

- *Funeral services, as currently practiced, are unsustainable:* In-ground burial takes up land that has competing uses for the important human needs of housing and agriculture.
- *Safety and Securities a growing concern:* Assaults and robberies are common in cemeteries as criminals take advantage of the remoteness of cemeteries and make families visiting them vulnerable.
- *Record-keeping requires attention:* Record-keeping in cemeteries need more focus as it is a very important function in the management of cemeteries and helps to maintain transparency.

9.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey and study, Ullhas Foundation would like to make few recommendations to address the issue and overcome them in a better and efficient manner:

We agree that there is scarcity of land and it is extremely difficult to get new land allotted from the DDA for cemeteries given the pressure on the DDA to allot land for other infrastructure needs like schools and hospitals. So measures need to be taken to use the land that is available optimally by adopting modern burial techniques being followed the world over. These include:-

- The installation of cell like structures inside the cemeteries to accommodate more dead bodies within limited space available This cell structure is working well in many southern states especially in all parts of Kerala.
- Underground construction could be explored where the underground cemeteries are feasible.
- The use of vertical cemetery should be explored to accommodate more bodies. One such cemetery operational is the ST. Thomas cemetery in Tuglakahabad
- Some of the best practices detailed in the international practices section of this report could be explored for better management of cemeteries.

- Government may be approached for subsidizing management for cemeteries as currently the only funds available are collected from the Christian families and occasional donations and this is simply not enough to maintain and run the cemeteries properly.
- Efforts should be made to take back control of cemeteries which have closed like LOTHIAN or NICHOLSAN cemetery because its land has come under the purview of the Archeological Survey of India so that they can be re-used by adopting new and modern eco-friendly techniques to manage them

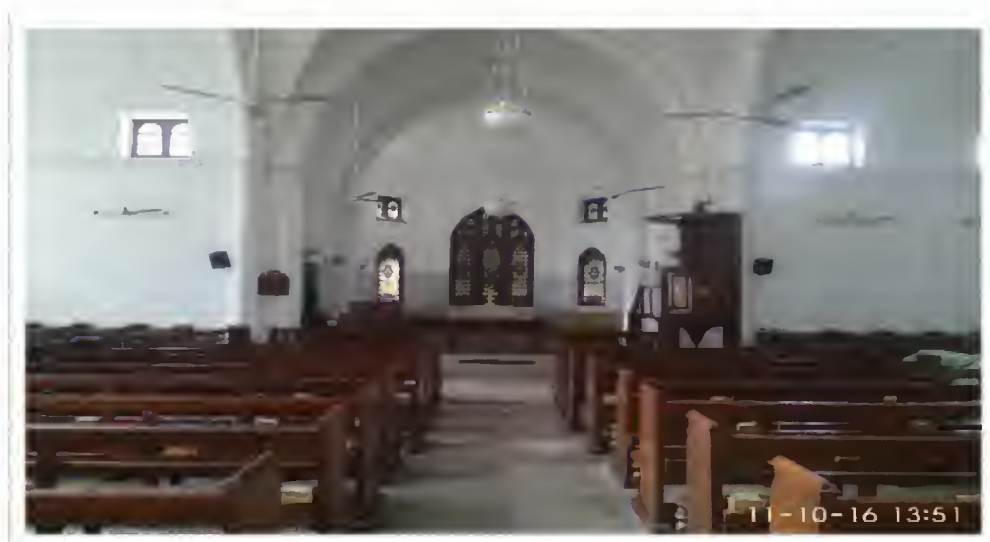
At the end we would once again like to thank the DMC for giving Ullhas this wonderful opportunity to submit this report.

Annexure

ANNEXURE 1:

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING VISITS TO CHURCHES AND CEMETERIES

1. CHRIST METHODIST CHURCH



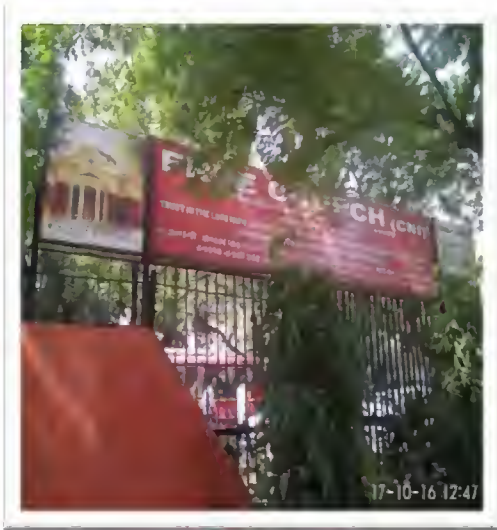
2. SACRED H



3. ST. JAMES CHURCH



FREE CHURCH



4. MAR THOMA CHURCH CENTRE



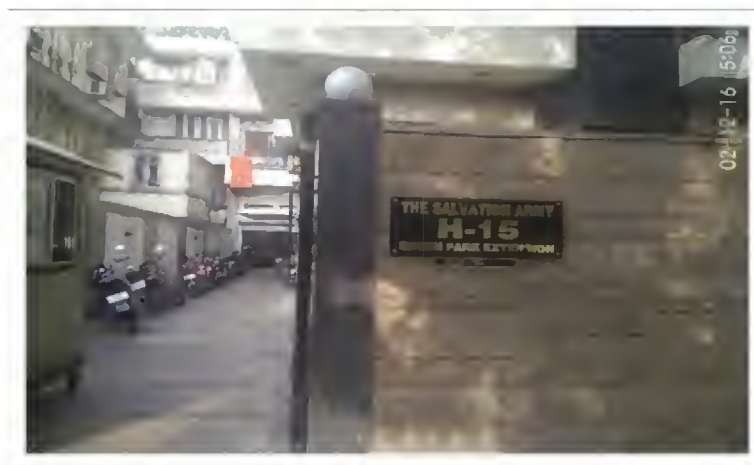
5. ST. LUKE'S CHURCH



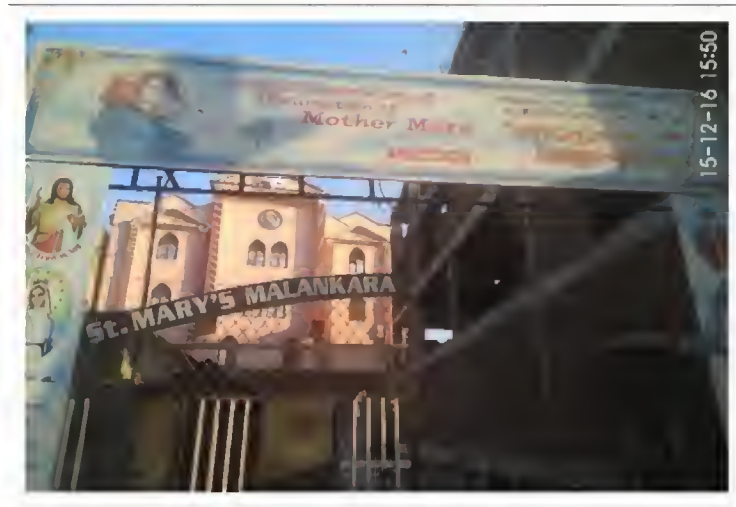
6. BAPTIST CHURCH



7. THE SALVATION ARMY



8. ST. MARY'S MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH



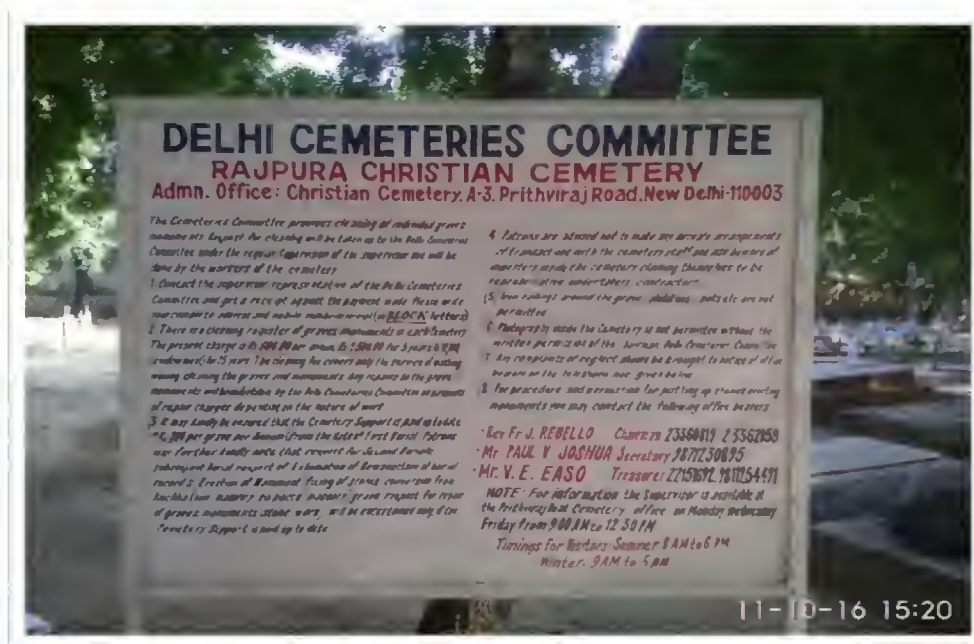
9. ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL



10. NICHOLSON CEMETERY



11. RAJPURA CEMETERY



12. YORK CEMETERY





15. INDIAN CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, BURARI



16. INDIAN CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, PAHARGANJ



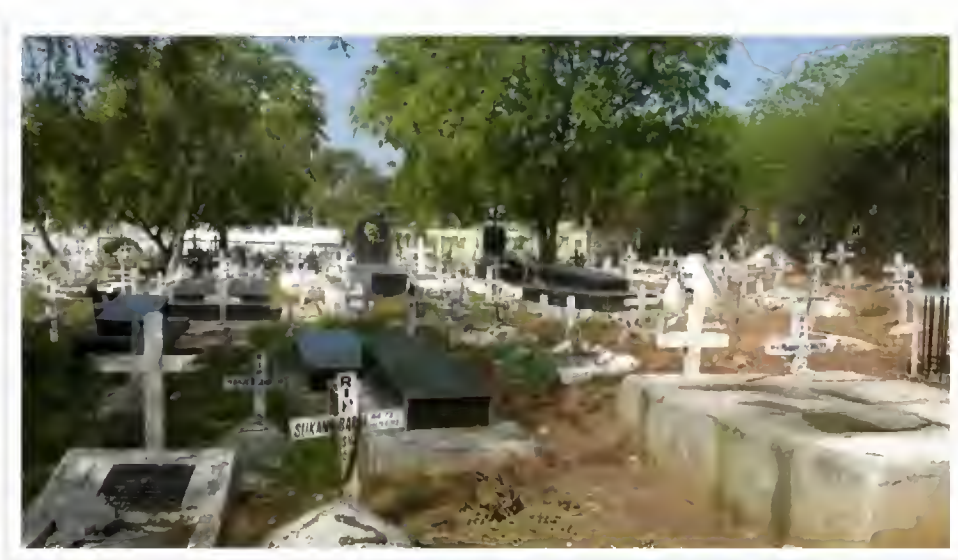
17. MCD CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, DWARKA



18. ALFA OMAGA CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, MANGOLPURI



19. ST. THOMAS CHRISTIAN CEMETERY, TUGHLAKABAD



ANNEXURE 2

This section comprises of the questionnaires and the documents as received from the Cemeteries Committees in regards to:

The Rules and Regulation as followed;

Certificate of Registration (provided by St. Thomas Christian Cemetery);

Documents as needed at the time of burial (provided by St. Thomas Christian Cemetery, Indian Christian Cemetery, Lodhi Crematorium);

Though we had requested all the cemeteries and churches to provide us with the documents but we were not provided. The request letter as shared with them in this regard is annexed along in annexure 2.

(This section is not included in this published report -- DMC)

ANNEXURE 3

This section deals with the policy pertaining to:

The Institutional Land Rates;

MPD 2021 Land Use Plan;

NDMC ACT 1994 Section 300 and

Policy pertaining to the rates for the Institutional Land.

(This section is not included in this published report -- DMC)

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